

Application No. 10/730,825
Amendment dated September 30, 2005
Reply to Office Action of May 4, 2005

Docket No. 1232-5222

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendment and following remarks.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-11 are pending in this application. Claim 1 is independent. All of the pending claims stand rejected.

By this amendment, claims 1 and 3 are amended, and new claim 12 is added. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,278,480 to Kurahashi et al. ("Kurahashi") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,793,419 to Fraley ("Fraley").

The Examiner indicates that Kurahashi discloses each and every element of claim 1 except for the holding member. The Examiner then indicates that "Kurahashi et al. teaches that the compound eye camera 1 is integrally provided with image pickup optical system 2, 3 and a LCD display device 4 ... Fraley suggests that a personal surveillance system comprises a CCD video camera 103 ... are in a single package 102 sufficiently small to be worn as a badge ... Therefore it would have been obvious ..."

Applicant respectfully disagree with the Examiner's basis for the rejection for at least the reasons set forth below.

First of all, Kurahashi discloses a compound eye camera system provided integrally with two image pickup elements 2, 3 and a display unit 4 as shown in Fig. 1. The image pickup

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elements positioned respectively at left and right sides each contains a lens barrel for obtaining stereoscopic images or a panorama image. Kurahashi, however, does not show the specifics of the compound eye nature of the camera system. For example, Fig. 3 of Kurahashi merely shows two CCDs 20a, 20b controlled by the driving circuit 24.

Secondly, disclosing a personal surveillance system without using a compound eye optical unit, Fraley fails to show or suggest "a hold member which holds the compound eye optical unit and the image pickup device ..." as recited in claim 1 of the present invention.

Nonetheless, claim 1 has been amended for further clarification. In particular, amended claim 1 recites "wherein the plurality of lenses of the compound eye optical unit is designed in such a way that an optical axis of an outer lens away from a center lens is inclined outward with respect to the optical axis of the center lens."

Referring to Fig. 3 and relevant portion of the original specification, one of the aspects of the present invention requires that the optical axis (shown by dash-dotted lines) of an outer lense is inclined outward to cause the optical axis on the emerging side to extend in a direction close to the perpendicular direction to the image pickup device. See, for example, paragraph [0033] of the original specification. As indicated in the specification, such a structure of the compound eye optical unit 104 can provide an image taking apparatus having a wide visual field angle with a compact size.

Applicant believes that neither Kurahashi nor Fraley shows or suggest this aspect of the present invention as featured in amended claim 1 as discussed above.

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Accordingly, amended claim 1 is believed to be allowable over the cited references (i.e., Kurahashi and Fraley), either taken alone or in combination, for at least the reasons discussed above.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

Applicant has not individually addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because Applicant submits that the independent claims from which they respectively depend are in condition for allowance as set forth above. Applicant however reserves the right to address such rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary.

New claim 12 has been added to recite the deleted element from claim 1 in a dependent form. For example, added dependent claim 12 further recites the "hold member" which was deleted from claim 1 after the amendment.

Applicant believes that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

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Docket No. 1232-5222

AUTHORIZATION

A petition for a two-month extension of time along with an authorization to charge the associated fee to our Deposit Account No. 13-4500 (Order No. 1232-5222) is enclosed, extending the date for responding until October 4, 2005. Should an additional extension of time be required to render this paper timely filed, such extension is hereby petitioned and the Commissioner is authorized to charge any other fees necessitated by this Amendment, or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 13-4500 (Order No. 1232-5222). A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED. An early and favorable examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: September 30, 2005

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